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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 002453

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/26/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [HA](#)  
SUBJECT: POLICE CHIEF CRITICIZES JUSTICE SYSTEM

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Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Thomas Tighe for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: Director General of the Haitian National Police (HNP) Mario Andresol denounced Haiti's corrupt justice system December 15 at a graduation ceremony for 567 cadets. He claimed the justice system "consists of a dictatorship of some judges who arbitrate based on their own interpretations of the law, and who sell justice to the highest bidders." The crowd appeared pleased at Andresol's frank remarks; however, both Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis and Justice Minister Rene Magloire were clearly perturbed. The judges went on strike for several days following Andresol's speech until Minister Magloire (Andresol's boss) said publicly December 22 that Andresol had been reprimanded. Also, the PM told the Ambassador that the police chief would have to clear future speeches through the PM's office. The public has responded with delight and relief that a government official (especially one so well-respected) has publicly recognized a shortfall within the GoH. Andresol's remarks served as a moment of clarity and have opened up further discussions by lawmakers and the public at large on justice reform. End summary.

Andresol Denounces Haiti's Justice System  
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12. (U) Andresol noted the degradation, despite Minustah's presence, of the security situation in Port-au-Prince. He then stressed the importance of judicial reform: despite the Justice Minister's efforts to end corruption, results are far from perceptible, he said. Haiti's judiciary structure remains fragile and characterized by the absence of maturity and competence, and by the dishonest culture of venality. In an even more direct attack, Andresol said justice is badly served in the hands of unstable, inconsistent judges and magistrates, who exercise power to satisfy their petty interests.

13. (U) Andresol went on to say that this situation requires strong measures -- even strong sanctions -- which would stem the injustice of Haiti's judicial system, the abuse of authority and the condemnation of all who rise and denounce

this rotten system, corrupted and corrupting, generator of crimes and of impunity. In conclusion, Andresol quoted Victor Hugo: there will come a time when the justice of man meets Justice.

Fallout: Judges Strike, PM Scolds Andresol, Parliamentarians Endorse the Speech

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¶4. (SBU) The week following Andresol's speech, the judges went on strike and called on the police chief to provide a list of corrupt judges within a 24-hour time frame. (Note: Andresol did not comply. End note.) Not all judges were shocked, however. Some, according to the daily journal Le Nouvelliste, said that Andresol has often claimed that a double mafia exists within the judicial and police structures, but he should have included the HNP in his attacks at the ceremony.

¶5. (C) Justice Minister Magloire reprimanded Andresol in a public statement and said that he went too far in his remarks. According to the Ambassador, the Prime Minister has also scolded Andresol and insists that from now on, Andresol clear his speeches through the PM's office. Andresol told DEA and Poloff that he was criticized privately by government officials for speaking so openly about the defunct judicial system in Haiti. Separately, but on the same dates, post also learned that the PM privately warned Andresol, Haitian Coast Guard Commander Joseph Jean Mary Wagnac, and Commissioner Patrice Israel of Haiti's anti-drug unit (French acronym, BLTS) of "being too close to the Americans." (Note: At the graduation ceremony the day of Andresol's speech, the Ambassador gave the police chief the keys to the recently donated vehicles, and reaffirmed USG support for the Haitian National Police. End note.)

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¶6. (U) Several parliamentarians have publicly supported Andresol's criticism of the corrupt judicial system in Haiti. Other post contacts have praised Andresol's speech which shed light on an issue that government officials have refused to address in public thus far. As one Haitian pointed out, it is important to make such statements because in Haitian culture, misconduct continues until publicly admonished.

¶7. (C) Comment: As an esteemed government officials, Andresol emboldened the public to speak openly about the corrupt judicial system. Haitian lawmakers and other press voices have asked for more moments of clarity such as Andresol presented to his audience. However, the press has also reported the displeasure of Andresol's superiors, portending an even stricter response for anyone who so bluntly criticizes the GoH in the future.

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